



BOOK REVIEWS

Hungary and the Hungarians: Western Europe's View in the Middle Ages. By Enikő Csukovits. Viella Historical Research 11. Rome: Viella Libreria Editrice, 2018. 233 pp.

The monograph presented here, published in 2018 by Italian publisher Viella, is the result of many years of research, as the author Enikő Csukovits herself notes. The book, entitled *Magyarországról és a magyarokról: Nyugat-Európa magyar-képe a középkorban*, took its original form in 2013, and it was submitted by Csukovits for her title as Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Two years later, the monograph was published with the support of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Centre for the Humanities as part of the series entitled *Monuments of Hungarian History. Dissertations*. The committee which read Csukovits's work (referred to as a "large doctoral thesis") in 2013 recommended it for publication in Hungarian and in translation. One of the reasons for this recommendation was to make the monograph, which fills a significant gap in scholarship concerning perceptions of cultural others, available to an international readership. Another was to make it possible to identify and indicate the sources of stereotypes concerning Hungarians which are still alive today. The publication of the work in English translation is thus a welcome contribution to the secondary literature.

Since the 2015 edition was reviewed in 2016 in the third volume of *The Hungarian Historical Review* by Judit Csákó, who summarized its contents, I feel exempt from this obligation. However, it should be noted for the sake of accuracy that I use the term "version" because Csukovits made certain changes to the publication printed in English in comparison to the Hungarian edition. The omission of chapter one, which was dedicated to the ways in which geographical knowledge developed in Medieval Europe, was the most significant of these changes (pp.14–16), though a small fragment of this chapter was integrated into the text of a later part of the English-language edition. Changes related to this were also made in the introduction. In the introduction, Csukovits explains her understanding of the concept of "Western Europe" as a geographical term, not a political term. As Gábor Klaniczay correctly pointed out in the review of the Hungarian-language edition, which was published in the journal *Buker* in 2016, we do know why Csukovits made no use of source materials of English and

“Spanish” provenance which have been both touched on and made available in the secondary literature in Hungarian. Perhaps it would have been better to replace this concept of Western Europe with reference to the area affected by the Latin-language cultural circle. This would have broadened the scope of inquiry and would have required more time, because, for example, literary output originating in Scandinavia, the Czech lands, and Poland would also have to have been taken into consideration.

When Csukovits was carrying out the proposed dissertation research with the assistance of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the reviewers Edit Madas, Klaniczay, and László Veszprémy suggested sources and publications that she had not yet taken into consideration. They emphasized, however, that she would have to make selections from among the sources and would have to choose the most important sources, which best illustrated the emerging view of Hungary and Hungarian people. On the basis of the overview of the sources offered by Csukovits, one can agree that from time to time an important event made the wider public opinion in Europe pay attention to Hungary. Throughout the Middle Ages, such events included incursions made by pagan Hungarians, the conversion of the Hungarians to Christianity, the Mongol invasion of 1241–1242, and the threat posed to Europe by Ottoman Turks. The source material used by Csukovits was adapted to several common themes, and this certainly influenced its selection. She used the sources which she herself considered most important.

In my view, a certain disparity within the range of source materials can be felt, and the sources from the Árpád Era are treated too selectively and laconically. Despite the situation indicated by Csukovits concerning the recognition, availability, and the status of study of sources, the center of gravity in her discussion visibly moved to the material originating from the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and not only on account of the quantity of sources or their accessibility, but also because of the research undertaken by Csukovits earlier. Csukovits used the listing of source texts published by Albin Ferenc Gombos more than eighty years ago (*Catalogus fontium historiae Hungaricae aevi ducum et regum ex stirpe Arpad descendantium ab anno Christi DCCC usque ad annum MCCC*) as a kind of guide to sources about Hungary in the period up to the early fourteenth century and thus corresponding to the Árpád Era. No such list is available for the source material concerning late medieval Hungary. *Catalogus* is a kind of an overview of source texts, and as has been shown by historians in recent decades, it is far from complete. László Veszprémy and Tamás Körmendi, for instance, have pointed out its deficiencies.

Csukovits has successfully taken into consideration the source groundwork without limitations from the perspective of genre, and this constitutes one of the indisputable merits of her work. In addition to historiographical sources, she has also used other sources which have been repeatedly omitted or used at best sporadically, for example descriptions of pilgrimages, travels, reports of legations, monuments of cartography, short stories, and chivalric romances. Csukovits emphasizes that knowledge about the Hungarian people and Hungary had been preserved in different texts, though she stresses that since they were handwritten, these texts were not always available to the persons interested. Csukovits points out that many of the resultant records did not survive, and thus it is difficult to say whether it is possible to obtain comprehensive knowledge about notions prevalent in the Middle Ages as the result of the research she has undertaken. One can also agree with the conclusion that there were no collections in Europe that would have contained the sum of knowledge about Hungary and its residents, to say nothing of sources that would have taken into consideration diverse opinions on the matter. Csukovits also points out that the appellation of Hungary appears in the monuments of medieval cartography more often than designations referring to other countries of Central Eastern Europe. Csukovits offers an appropriate set of 26 maps of the world (pp.70–75, 189–91). The above observation could also be applied to historiographical sources, which can be shown by at least looking through indexes to the publisher *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* series *Scriptores*, *Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*.

Csukovits rightly pays attention to the meaning of ethnonyms and terms used in relation to Hungarians, especially in the period before their conversion to Christianity. However, it is possible here to have reservations about the exhaustiveness of her discussion of the exoethnonyms which were used to describe Hungarians in the past. She limits herself to a relatively small group of them: Saracens, Huns, and Avars (pp.18–19), leaving the others unmentioned. Meanwhile, on the basis of the list compiled by Gombos, it is possible to indicate ethnonyms used to describe Hungarians which often are found in sources related to one another by filiation, such as Hagarites, which gains in importance in the context of the opinion of Ekkehart IV of Sankt Gallen, contained in *Events of Sankt Gallen*, who expressed a negative opinion in the matter of identifying Magyars with Hagarites. Among other ethnonyms which were used to describe Hungarians in other sources, and which bore specific associations or contents, the following should be mentioned: Jews, Turks, Massagets, Parthians, Scythians, Slavs, Sarmatians.

In the context of primarily Hun-Hungarian identification, which existence was only signalled by Csukovits (pp.18–19), in our opinion, it is also worth paying attention to accounts included in the explicitly connected texts *Deeds of the bishops of Tongeren, Maastricht and Liège* by Heriger of Lobbes and, based on them *Deeds of the bishops of Liège* by Egidio of Orval which show the overlap of motifs with the account included in the list of monk of St. Germain to Dado, bishop of Verdun from the beginnings of the tenth century regarding famine and the abandonment of dwellings by Huns or Hungarians, while in the background one also overhears the echo of the Latin word “hungry” and the Old High German “hungar.”

Csukovits also indicates the meaning of terms used to denote Hungarians before the Hungarians adopted Christianity and later used by participants in the crusades when they met Hungarians, such as pagans, barbarians, uncouth, and cruel (pp.19 and 23). In the context of abovementioned terms, attention should also be paid to the role of term *gens*, which is used in some sources as an exoethnonym of Hungarians, primarily in accounts about the abandonment by the Hungarians of Scythia and incursions at the end of the ninth century and throughout much of the tenth. Attention should also be paid to the role of more complex terms used alongside the ethnonym *(H)Ungari*, such as: crueler than all monsters, fiercest, most abominable, dirtiest, most burdensome, strongest, proficient in the use of arms, deceitful, worst, bestial, strong, and hostile to God.

Expressions which were used to designate Hungarians in the sources also constitute a form of information about perceptions of them: unknown, non-mentioned tribe, our former enemies, enemies hitherto unknown to those peoples, or new enemies. Csukovits mentions this problem laconically in relation to the record *Annals of Saint Bertin* (p.17). The account preserved in *The Younger Chronicle of Ebersberg* and the letter of Prince of Austria Albert I Habsburg from 1291 to the bishop of Passau, which traces the Hungarians back to a serpent living in marshes, are not among the sources used by Csukovits.

One might have expected Csukovits to pay attention to the range of influence of individual identifications, motifs, descriptions, and their perceived “popularity” in a monograph which summarizes perceptions of Hungarians and Hungary. As I noted above, she is aware that it is impossible to obtain a comprehensive overview of views on this subject due to the status of the sources. Nevertheless, she should have paid more consistent attention to both the quantity of preserved manuscripts and the ways in which the respective texts were used by later authors. Had she done so, it would have been possible to

obtain at least an approximate view of the popularity and thus influence of given perceptions. One notes a certain inconsistency here. In the case of e.g. *Austrian chronicle of 95 monarchs* (p.37) and the chronicles written by Domenico da Gravina and Giovanni Villani and Matteo Villani (pp.30, 128), Csukovits pays attention to the significance of the number of preserved manuscripts of these chronicles and their popularity. She also notes, in relation to the work *World Chronicle* by Hartmann Schedel, not only its publication in Latin or German but also the number of preserved copies (p.66, footnote 260; p.167). She similarly takes into consideration the manuscript tradition of *Description of Eastern Europe* (p.78) and the chronicles written by Jakob Unrest (p.145, footnotes 114–15).

Csukovits devotes no attention to the so-called manuscript tradition in the case of account preserved in the chronicle by Regino of Prüm (p.18), though it would have sufficed to refer to the study written by Wolf-Rüdiger Schleidgen (*Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm*, Mainz: Gesellschaft für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, 1977). She also gives no consideration to its influence, either direct or indirect, on subsequent historiography, for instance on editions of Hungarian gesta or on *Annals of Metz*, *Chronicle* by Annalista Saxo or the written by Ekkehard of Aura, Otto of Freising, Godfrey of Viterbo, and Martin of Opava, which were widely read in the Middle Ages. In the case of *History of the archbishops of Salona and Split* by Thomas of Split, which she does discuss (pp.52–53), the problem of the manuscript tradition of this work and its influence on subsequent historiography was omitted.

Csukovits emphasizes that the conversion to Christianity by Hungarians had a vital significance in shaping views of Hungarians to the west. She also assigns a vital role to the positive attitude of Hungarians towards pilgrims during the times of King Saint Stephen, and she associates the appearance of mentions with a negative tone, like the visions of pagan Hungarians, preserved in descriptions of crusades with the defense by Hungarians of their belongings against newcomers. She also points out that Hungarians themselves and their rulers shaped their image when they made pilgrimages, waged war, or went on missions to the west.

In this context, her failure to devote attention to the influence of monuments of Hungarian historiography on opinions concerning Hungarians and Hungary in the west leaves the reader with a certain sense of dissatisfaction. She would have done well to have included, alongside her discussion of sources mentioned to point out views emphasizing the affluence of Hungary of the time, to note the reference to the image of Hungary known in the eleventh through fourteenth centuries as *pastures of the Romans*, especially since she attempted also to use

records of a chorographic and geographic character. This term appears *inter alia*, as it is believed, in texts related by filiation or resultant, under the influence of Hungarian historiographic records, such as *Hungarian-Polish Chronicle*, *Verse chronicle of Stična*, and the *History of the Archbishops of Salona and Split* by Thomas of Split. It also appears, as noted by Csukovits, in *Louis VII's Journey of Orient* by Odo of Deuil, where the term *granary of Julius Caesar* is used, and in *Description of Eastern Europe*, but in both cases Csukovits does not note that the terms refer to Hungary (pp.24, 75–82). A panorama of sources which were created outside the area of Hungary, and which describe the land as the *pastures of the Romans* is complemented by the source known as *The Description of Lands*, quite laconically in relation to Hungary but baselessly escaping the notice of Hungarian historians (it has been dated to the years between 1255 and 1257/1260).

In the context of shaping the view of Hungarians and Hungary in the west, the chronicle of the world by Alberich of Troisfontaines was omitted. Alberich of Troisfontaines, it is assumed, gathered information from his Hungarian informants, who knew the Hungarian historiographic records. Csukovits would have done well to have taken into consideration the influence of Hungarian chronicles issued in print at the end of Middle Ages, copies of which found their way to the west as early as the end of the fifteenth century, though this would have required painstaking inquiry. In the case of the first of these works, Andreas Hess' chronicle from 1473, only ten of an estimated print run of 240 are known. The fact that the copies have been preserved to this day in library collections in Western Europe indicates the interest with which they met. Similarly, transcripts of the chronicle issued by Johannes Menestarffer (Wien 1481, issued in print in 1473) have also been preserved in the Archdiocesan Library in Pécs, and the text of Hartmann Schedel's collection is available at the Bavarian State Library. The German translation of Jan Thuróczy's chronicle, which was issued in print in 1488 and was created in Bavaria after 1490, is preserved in the Heidelberg University Library. Each of these items would have been worth including among these kinds of testimonials.

The abovementioned handwritten copies and translations of texts of Hungarian chronicles confirm E. Csukovits's conclusions are based only on works of Henry of Mügeln and Jakob Unrest. All of these texts are a sign of an unabated interest in Hungarians and their country in neighboring Austrian lands or more widely Austrian-Bavarian lands (p.39). As was noted by Veszprémy in his review, the omission of the role of familiarity with *The Deeds of the Hungarians* by Simon of Kéza in the Apennine Peninsula does not allow for a full assessment

of the shaping of views of the Hungarians and Hungary from the end of thirteenth century.

Csukovits should have included in her discussion of monuments of Hungarian historiography that shaped views concerning Hungarians and Hungary the transcripts of handwritten Hungarian chronicles which were either transcribed by authors of foreign origin or were created in the West or found their way there in the Middle Ages.

Csukovits rightly includes *Österreichische Chronik* by Jakob Unrest, parish priest of Sankt Martin am Techelsberg in Carinthia, in sources discussing Hungarians and Hungary. She suggests, however, that, although this is not explicitly shown in the source text, the parish priest from Carinthia compared Turkish and Hungarian incursions into Carinthia from the 1480s with a plague of locusts (p.148). In this context, it is possible to point out that metaphors comparing Hungarians to locusts appear primarily, though not exclusively, in descriptions of Hungarians making incursions into Europe in the first half of tenth century, e.g. in *The Chronicle of the Czechs* by Cosmas of Prague, *The Chronicle or history of the two cities* by Otto of Freising, and *The Chronicle about the Princes of Bavaria* by Andreas of Ratisbon.

The suggestions raised by reviewers notwithstanding, which given the breadth of the research topic and the range of potentially relevant sources, should be considered natural. Csukovits's monograph provides an overview of perceptions concerning Hungarians which covers several centuries and is based on an array of sources diverse in genre and provenance. It also familiarizes the English readership with a research topic undertaken primarily by Hungarian scholars interested in perceptions of Hungarians in distant epochs and provides a foundation for further research, for instance of a comparative character. Csukovits's work also fills at least partly the gap in the research on so-called *origines gentium*. This gap has been felt in part due to the publication by Akademie Verlag of Alheydis Plassmann's *Origo gentis: Identitäts- und Legitimitätsstiftung in früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Herkunftserzählungen* (Orbis mediaevalis. Vorstellungswelten des Mittelalters 7, Berlin 2006), in which the question of perceptions concerning Hungarians was not considered at all.

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Esterházy Pál és Esterházy Orsolya levelezése [The correspondence between Pál Esterházy and Orsolya Esterházy]. Edited by Noémi Viskolcz and Edina Zvara. Budapest: MTA KIK–Kossuth Kiadó, 2019. 352 pp.

The work under review is the first in a new series (*Esterházyana*), though it is certainly not without precedent. It fits well into the series of works containing the correspondence of prominent couples in the Early Modern era (for instance, the correspondence between Tamás Nádasdy and his wife Orsolya Kanizsai, the correspondence between Pál Nyáry and his wife Kata Várday, and the correspondence between Miklós Esterházy and his wife and the daughter of Kata Várday, Krisztina Nyáry). It also constitutes an important addition to the systematic study and publication of documents concerning the Esterházy family and, in particular, Pál Esterházy. Pál Esterházy's philanthropic and literary activities were thoroughly covered by participants in the 2013 Rebakucs conference, whose presentations were published as a volume of articles two years later. Esterházy's private life, however, has for the most part been considerably less visible to the research community. Notably, this edition, it seems, will not reveal the secret face of Pál Esterházy either, for although it offers a written record of his 30-year marriage, it seems to provide little more than the morsels of two separately lived lives. As the editors note, "the correspondence is an interesting but often one-sided record of a long marriage. Much is left unsaid in the letters, as if they both had other, separate lives" (p.48).

János Hárich, who compiled Pál Esterházy's extensive correspondence and other documents, estimated the total collection of letters to number some 7,000 items, 362 of which belong to the correspondence between Esterházy and his first wife, Orsolya Esterházy. This volume presents this body of documents. The primary materials are preceded by four texts. A foreword by István Monok is followed by the "Introduction and Overview of the Research History" by Noémi Viskolcz. Here, it might have been worthwhile to have offered more detail on the lessons to be drawn from the letters and other issues of interest from the perspectives of culture and cultural history. Viskolcz rightly notes that the letters give one considerably more insight into Orsolya's life, even if she was sometimes terse in her phrasing. Orsolya Esterházy was unable to spell foreign words correctly, and her handwriting suggests lack of regular practice, though it perhaps would be an exaggeration to call it ugly. There was a rapid

deterioration in the quality of her handwriting in the 1670s, which Viskolcz suggests may have been the consequence of a medical issue, perhaps a trauma. Indeed, Viskolcz convincingly links this decline to certain events mentioned in the family documents. The rules according to which the letters were transcribed are precise and seem to have been consistently observed, but I will discuss this in more detail in the section on questions concerning transcription.

The introduction is followed by a historical overview entitled “Pál Esterházy and Orsolya Esterházy,” also by Noémi Viskolcz. After Orsolya Esterházy became an orphan at a relatively young age, the fight for control of her property and wealth, the measures surrounding the papal dispensation, and the secret marriage and resulting family scandal all illustrate that, from the outset, the Esterházy family subordinated everything to its marriage strategy. There was no question of a marriage based on love, and indeed one is hard pressed to discern even a trace of the kind of mutual respect that one finds, for example, in the exchange of letters between Tamás Nádasdy and Orsolya Kanizsai. While the introduction promises a glimpse into the history of a long marriage, the letters bear witness to the way in which Pál and Orsolya lived apart for 30 years. It is perhaps not the job of the people who have assembled this collection of primary source materials to deal with such matters, but anyone who wants to subject this body of documents to a meaningful analysis will have to include other aspects that are essential to the study of women’s fates in the seventeenth century. Orsolya very clearly did not learn foreign languages, nor did she move much in society, and the fact that she was often pregnant (she gave birth to at least 17 children) may have been a hindrance, but as the editors of the volume themselves observe, most of the noblewomen of the time were not as drastically cut off from both the culture and society of their time as she was, and it was Pál, her one-time guardian and then husband (who is portrayed as a benevolent man), who may well have been responsible for this. In any case, the question merits more thorough discussion in a comparative framework, if only because the insights thus gained might prompt us to reconsider our image of Pál Esterházy. To give just one example, Pál Esterházy kept admirable control of the family’s papers, incomes, and expenditure, and he kept meticulous records of all items (thus offering a veritable treasure trove for historians today). However, this is perhaps only half the story. The portrait of Pál as a skillful organizer with an almost obsessive compulsion to write seems more complex when one considers that the newly widowed Esterházy kept careful records, down to the last penny, of the costs of his wife’s funeral without, however, bothering to mention when it was held.

The intricate history of the family is followed by a discussion by Erika Kiss of Orsolya's dowry. The text contains many passages which were cited in the preceding essay, and it might have been preferable for a more cautious editor to have eliminated this redundancy and make the narrative more coherent. That said, Kiss's contribution is a strong piece of writing, clearly linked both to the letters and to the research that has been carried out in recent years to inventory the Esterházy treasures (I am thinking here first and foremost of the 2006 and 2013 exhibitions). This discussion of the fates of the jewelry, the trousseau, and items of clothing offer some context for the letters and also can be compared with and added to the inventories accessible today, first and foremost Pál's inventory list, which was previously thought to be jewelry designs.

Turning to the transcriptions of the various texts, several observations can be made. In accordance with the principles underlying the publication of these kinds of texts, the editors have put together a partially standardized text. While the resulting texts preserve features of the language and spelling of the time, we are nevertheless confronted with texts which have never been seen before and which are difficult to search, since they are not entirely standardized. The data concerning the letters (serial numbers, sender, addressee, date) are given, followed by the texts of the letters themselves, the details of the envelope (or the exterior paper in which the letter was sent) and the autograph, and the precise archival notation used today. The texts are clear and legible, but there are some inconsistencies in the use of an exclamation mark in parentheses (“(!)”) to call the reader's attention to particular details. In the case of text written by Orsolya, for instance, the editors have used this to indicate passages in which she confused the vowels “a” and “o,” for instance spelling the Hungarian word “szolgálatomat” (“my servant”) incorrectly as “szolgálotamat.” However, no indication is given to indicate spots in the texts written by Pál in which he made similar mistakes. It might have been preferable simply to have explained these features of the texts in the introduction instead of cluttering the transcriptions with these kinds of markings. The notes of the critical apparatus and the explanatory notes are not separated from each other, but rather are given in footnotes numbered consecutively. Most of the explanatory notes provide useful information, but again it would have been helpful to have paid a bit more attention to consistency and coherence. For instance, at times the editors seem to think they know, in connection with mention of an approaching coronation, which coronation the texts are referring to (p.345), while at other times they do not (p.333). It also might have been preferable to have included a prosopography as an appendix.

Last but not least, the book is a very impressively designed publication and is clearly the result of conscientious, attentive work. It includes an array of lovely illustrations which have been judiciously selected and it has been attractively typeset. It is a work worthy of the Esterházy family and legacy, and it will serve as an immensely useful source for scholars on the era.

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Cameralism and Enlightenment: Happiness, Governance and Reform in Transnational Perspective. Edited by Ere Nokkala and Nicholas B. Miller. With the editorial assistance of Anthony J. La Vopa. New York–London: Routledge, 2020. x+325 pp.

In the past decade, political economy scholarship has paid considerable attention to the intellectual contexts that fundamentally affected the formation of modern economic thinking by the period of the High Enlightenment. In this course, new findings on interstate relations, the transmission and dispersion of economic ideas, and practices on sub-national and supra-national levels led to a reappraisal of the old labels of mercantilism, physiocracy, and cameralism. Especially in case of the latter, the renewed interest in revising the old interpretation raised doubts concerning its simplistic elements, in particular its elusive character and its identification with German economic theory. The ongoing debates on cameralist thought revealed two main sources of these pretensions in historiography created partly by Anglo-French writers on political economy and partly by German economic historians, both of whom labeled cameralism primarily as a German variation of mercantilism.

By deconstructing this old vision, according to which cameralist policy was a coherent, static, and systematic phenomenon, the most recent investigations have detected subversive synergies and sought to inspect cameralist thought as a changing and European subject, all the while bringing the problems of normative political language, existing practices, and disciplinary boundaries to the fore. Reflecting on these issues, the past years witnessed the evolution of two conceptualizations. The most recent development is connected to Martin Seppel and Keith Tribe (*Cameralism in Practice: State Administration and Economy in Early Modern Europe*. Woodbridge–Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2017), which concentrates on the pragmatic side of cameralism, characterizing it as a living and European discourse centered around the local university culture and the coexistence of early modern administration and economy. The other alternative, based on a reevaluation of Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi's place in the eighteenth-century world (Ere Nokkala. *From Natural Law to Political Economy: J.H.G. von Justi on State, Commerce and International Order*. Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2019), underlies this collection of studies under discussion, which, as the title indicates, places itself at the borderlands of political economy and Enlightenment studies, while it seeks to shed light on the gains and losses provided by a transnational perspective.

As for its approach, as the introduction promises, this collection of studies chooses the path of the intellectual history of political economy, and it goes further in the direction of explaining cameralism in terms of political theory. In doing so, the editors of the volume, Ere Nokkala (University of Helsinki) and Nicholas B. Miller (University of Lisbon), stress the key words “porosity” and “blending” as explanatory categories for inspecting cameralism not as a rigid entity, but rather, as they suggest, as an “aspirational practice” and a “lens” through which cameralists were connected to the broader intellectual environment of the eighteenth century (p.16). Exploring the interplays between cameralism and the Enlightenment, the volume strives to draw together the processes of economization and politicization under the so-called “economic turn,” discussing both phenomena as starting points for an evolving cameralist agenda across eighteenth-century Europe. As for the other undertakings in the volume, its aim is to dissolve the old categorization in two senses: in reflecting on the generally accepted prejudices and misinterpretations in historiography and in escaping the discussion of cameralism in the conventional framework of the German *Sonderweg* theory (p.3).

The thirteen essays in the volume present the findings of three international workshops organized by the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, The Göttingen Institute for Advanced Study and the Research Network: Cameralism across the World of Enlightenment: Nature, Order, Diversity, Happiness between 2016 and 2017.¹ The studies offer glimpses in three coherent parts into the main intersections where cameralist thought was influenced by other ideas, ideological frameworks, and practices.

The essays in the first part (“Interactions”) discuss the interrelations between natural law and political economy from various angles, explaining their significance in developing early practice-oriented cameralism to a theory-based state science, with a special account of economic actors. From the point of view of historiography, Lars Magnusson’s criticism targets the reduced scope that drew a close association between cameralist thought and the absolute state. As for the changes in cameralism, he goes on to argue that its transformation into an economy- and natural rights-based discipline was much more influenced by the natural jurisprudence of Christian Thomasius than that of Christian Wolff. This general observation is discussed more thoroughly in Hans Erich Bödeker’s essay, in which he pays particular attention to the reconciliation of

1 <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/cameralism/544617.html>. Accessed September 26, 2021.

private interest with the common good argumentation. As it is presented in his study, the combination of the two in the writings of influential cameralists, such as Justi, Sonnenfels, and Daniel Voss can be traced back to personal intentions and dispositions to the application of voluntaristic and paternalistic traditions in natural law. Therefore, the transformation of the concept of happiness, bringing the idea of state tutelage to the fore by the late eighteenth century, was a hesitant and non-simultaneous process, rather than a strictly chronological one. (p.71)

The other two essays in this part seek to find new evidence of the connection between cameralist thought and international relations, especially international trade and politics. Examining Justi's publications, both essays go against the old interpretation that equates cameralism with a reduced interest in political power and domestic administration, arguing that in the context of the Europe of the Seven Years War, cameralists faced the challenge of joining the discussion on the "jealousy of trade." With a focus on the expansion of the cameralist vision to international trade, Ere Nokkala's essay focuses on the ambitious but less successful campaign of Friedrich II between 1750s and 1760s, which aimed at implementing extensive reforms to Prussia's domestic and foreign policies. Justi, as one of the promoters of this campaign, had a substantial role in producing publications in which, using the metaphor of "the man of the world," he described Prussia as a new Athens, whose trading nation lived in a monarchy rather than a republic. This argumentation is approached in Koen Stapelbroek's essay from the angle of translations and intercultural exchanges. Through a multi-contextual analysis (Austrian, Prussian, French, Dutch), the study offers insights into the history of translating Justi's anti-Dutch and anti-republican vision on European interstate relations in the 1770s, when, instigated by the rising economic patriotism after the abolition of the Franco-Dutch commercial treaty, the Dutch republic sought to reconfigure its place among European states.

The essays in the second part ("Widening Perspectives") discuss two classical fields of inquiry, both of which received particular attention in Michel Foucault's writings, too. Focusing on the interculturality of cameralism, Nicolas B. Miller's essay describes the interest in populationism as a distinctive characteristic of cameralistic thinking, making cameralists compatible with eighteenth-century comparative science. Emphasizing Justi's uniqueness among his contemporaries, however, Miller's argument, which links his efforts to draw general conclusions from comparisons of European populations to the political-moral school that used to be associated with Montesquieu and the Scottish moralists, would have merited a broader explanation. The study fails to recognize the other possible

sources of the (German) non-moralizing fashion of comparative political analysis, such as statistics, political geography, natural history, etc. Intellectual kinship is also the central question of Richard Hölzl's essay. In the framework of presentism, he approaches his subject from the angle of the environmental history of ideas and explores the intersection of the three areas demarcated by the Foucauldian ideas of *gouvernementalité* and biopolitics, ecological statehood, and cameralist efficiency. By examining the texts of Justi, Pfeiffer, and Sonnenfels in this context, he comes to recognize three basic segments of ecological statehood (the efficient exploitation and conservation of natural resources and the management of natural hazards) as the constituents of cameralist thought.

The essays in the third section ("Dissemination and Local Mediation") center around the multifaceted problem of cultural translation and dissemination. Concentrating on the intellectual implications, on the one hand, they discuss the influence of cameralism on knowledge production in a specific historical context, but on the other hand, they also shed light on the struggles of interpreting cameralist thought in recent scholarship. As for the political stake of adapting the cameralist framework, the essays by Alexandra Ortolja-Baird, Alexandre Mendes Cunha, Adriana Luna-Fabritius, and Danila E. Raskov seem to agree that, despite the cultural diversities, cultural transmission in the Lombard, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian surfaced either by domesticating the setting or just some elements of the economic and administrative practice (or discourse) of enlightened reformism, including authors such as Bielefeld, Justi, Sonnenfels, Friedrich II, Beccaria, and Melon. Therefore, processing this intellectual package could yield different results and serve various purposes, from implementing a real practice (Lombardy) to gaining political influence in economic administration and reform (Portugal, Spain) and representing a reformist intention in the tsarist court (Russia).

As for dealing with the conceptual difficulties, all four essays follow different strategies. While Ortolja-Baird investigates the intellectual career of Cesare Beccaria in a classical biographical framework, exploring it from Italian political economy to Austrian cameralist reform, Mendes Cunha and Luna-Fabritius discuss the interactions between their translator protagonists (Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho, Francisco Mariano Nipho, etc.) and the multilayered context in which cultural transmission occurred. In contrast, Raskov's essay seeks to position the accumulation of economic knowledge (including the texts by cameralist authors) beginning after the launch of political instructions by Catherine II (Nakaz) in a holistic framework. Deconstructing the functionality usually attributed to

translations, he argues that the presence of the cameralist spirit in eighteenth-century Russia can be explained by the logic of the “elective affinities,” rather than coherent development. From this point of view, Keith Tribe’s fair criticism on how to define and investigate cameralist thought (“What is Cameralism?”) is especially valuable. Even if his pragmatic definition (“taught practice”) seems to contradict the approach followed in this volume. Jonas Gerlings’ contribution to Immanuel Kant’s account of cameral sciences is the odd one out in this part, as it returns to the issue of intellectual kinship. Kant’s affinity with the cameral sciences, misinterpreted by the scholarship, as he argues, cannot be discerned from his philosophical critiques, but from his social status in Königsberg’s elite, his lectures given to state officials, and his engagement in promoting luxury.

The volume ends with Anthony J. La Vopa’s epilogue, which repositis Peter Gay’s account of what the investigation of structures means for scholarship on the intellectual history of the Enlightenment. In his concluding remarks, La Vopa considers the interplay and convergences (or blending) between eighteenth-century political economy and cameralist discourse as a specific compound, characteristic mostly for the formation of cameralist thought. Concerning this general assumption and the volume’s pretensions on this issue, two further implications should be noted, both relating to the perspective of the history of science neglected by this volume. First, the essays in the volume bring in a number of examples of the heterogeneity of cameralist discourse. With some exceptions (Stapelbroek, Raskov), however, the references to other fields of knowledge, such as statistics, physiocracy, natural history, etc. are given without much reflection. Even if the editors’ argument relies on a comprehensive understanding of porosity and blending, this point would have merited a wider perspective for a comparative analysis of the eighteenth-century disciplinary landscape and knowledge production. This maneuver might have been beneficial, as it could have provided further rhetorical and structural evidence not only concerning the complexity of cameralist discourse, but also concerning the question of why blending and porosity actually occurred in adapting and disseminating cameralist thought.

Second, the essays of the volume focus on explaining cameralist thought in the context of political economy. Although this choice is aligned with the volume’s intellectual program, it causes avoidable losses in semantics. The most noticeable example of these simplifications is the inconsistent translation of Justi’s practical cameralism (“Polizeiwissenschaft”) either as the “science of *Policey*” or as the received anachronisms the “science of police” or “police science”

(widely used only from the mid-nineteenth century onwards). Interestingly, both translations ignore the general meaning of “Polizeiwissenschaft,” referred to as a political science (“scientia politica”) primarily in the German-speaking world. In conceptual terms, this remained in use even in second half of the eighteenth century, dating back to the dissolution of the early modern Aristotelian political doctrine. Reflecting on the historical background of intellectual exchange between natural jurisprudence and cameralist thought would have proven especially helpful.

All in all, *Cameralism and Enlightenment* is a rich and valuable collection of essays reflecting on thought-provoking ideas, and it provides an impressive account of the intersections between cameralist thought and the Enlightenment movement. With its choice of subject, the book merits scholarly attention, and it offers several fundamental arguments which will hopefully lead to constructive debates in the field. As for the intellectual position of the volume, it seeks to describe its subject as a general European phenomenon, compatible with other eighteenth-century trends in politics and economy. By challenging some of the pretensions of the scholarship, it places itself in an inconvenient position of navigating and mediating between incommensurable traditions of discourse of intellectual history and political economy studies. In doing so, it provides a decentered view on cameralism, primarily based on the European dispersion and dissemination of Justi’s account. Therefore, the volume’s transnational perspective is rather set on interpreting the implications of Justi’s attempts to expand the cameralist scope, rather than on integrating other less-known representatives of cameralism. The other great concern of the volume is that it centers on avoiding the trap of the German *Sonderweg* theory, which is especially welcome and is articulated most clearly in the essays of third section, the greatest achievement of which is that it provides novel approaches to the Mediterranean, Iberian, and Russian perspectives. It is a great loss, however, that following the wide and integrative approach of the workshop papers, other regional histories, such as those of Scandinavia and East-Central Europe, were not included in this volume.

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Roma Voices in History: A Sourcebook; Roma Civic Emancipation in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe from the 19th Century until World War II. Edited by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov. Leiden: Brill–Ferdinand Schöningh, 2021. 1104 pp. doi: 10.30965/9783657705184

Roma Voices in History is an unprecedented and, therefore, extremely precious publication which will definitely change the paradigms in Romani studies from various points of view by re-writing several stereotypical presumptions, prejudices, historical fake-news, and misunderstandings which have dominated various scientific discourses, including historical, ethnographical, and sociological research. Over the course of the last 30 years, the authors, Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov, both of whom work at the School of History at the University of St. Andrews, have written a great number of books and articles about Roma history with a specific focus on Bulgaria, Central Asia and the Caucasus, and the Ottoman Empire. In the relatively small circle of international scholars in Romani studies, Marushiakova and Popov have a rich scientific oeuvre, both as historians and ethnologists. Marushiakova is also the president of the Gypsy Lore Society, the world's oldest organization of Roma studies, founded in Great Britain in 1888 but located in the USA since 1989. The present sourcebook is the result of an ERC-project entitled *RomaInterbellum: Roma Civic Emancipation Between the Two World Wars*, carried out between 2016 and 2021.

Both the *RomaInterbellum* and *Roma Voices in History* offer a new approach to the study of Roma history in which archival documents prove that the various Roma communities in Europe, instead of being only “passive recipients of policy measures, are also active architects of their own lives (XIX).” This new paradigm, which implies taking a *longue durée* view of Roma history and suggests that Roma are active subjects and participants in their history and, more concretely, in their political emancipation, complements the existing paradigms about Roma history. As Mátyás Binder notes, referring to the research of Thomas Acton and Pál Nagy, Roma history has either been viewed as a history of struggle and persecution or as the paradigm of changing modes of coexistence (Mátyás Binder, “*A cigányok*”, vagy a “*cigánykérdés*” története? *Áttekintés a magyarországi cigányok történeti kutatásairól* [2009]). According to other views, Roma have two histories: one that is written from outside (by non-Roma historians) and one that is mostly written by “self-appointed” representatives of a naïve science (Péter Tóth, *A*

magyarországi cigányság története a feudalizmus korában [2006]). Finally, there is a body of widely acknowledged and frequently cited literature which presents Roma as a “people without history” (Katie Trumpener, *The Time of the Gypsies* [1992]), as people who master the “art of not being governed” (James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed* [2009]), or as a culture based on bricolage and exchange (Judith Okely, *Constructing Culture through Shared Location, Bricolage and Exchange* [2011]). Marushiakova and Popov sharply criticize these approaches and emphasize the existence of historical consciousness among Roma and, therefore, the evidence of Roma history, also accentuating that “how much and what kind of historical sources still remain undiscovered in archives and libraries worldwide and ... have not been put into academic circulation, hardly anyone can determine” (p.XX).

Thus, innovative and pioneering approaches lie both in the collection and presentation of the primary sources (roughly 1,000 pages, with the longest sections devoted to Bulgaria, Romania, and the USSR, while Greece, Latvia, and Finland are covered in the shortest ones) and in the surrounding context sketched in the comments following the primary sources, offering an interpretation which, instead of providing simply a “Roma-centric prism,” reflects on the Roma emancipatory movements in line with the general historical and social context. This integrative view is also expressed in Marushiakova and Popov’s definition of civic emancipation: it is an action for the sake of an equilibrium between the principal dimensions of the Roma presence (community and society), acceptable both for the Roma themselves and for the macro-society. Therefore, according to Marushiakova and Popov, the Roma movement for civic emancipation is a permanent struggle to achieve the equal civic status of the Roma as an ethnic community and as individual citizens with their rights in all fields of social life (political, religious, educational, economic, cultural, etc.). It should be underlined, however, that no other book or previous research on a transnational level has been published about the early stages of Roma emancipation. Normally, research projects and databases deal with the Roma civic movement only after World War II. As Acton observes, for instance, “there were no transnational entities until 1945, only various survival strategies (...) until 1945 Roma politics was based on acceptance of marginalization and submission to the nation-state” (Thomas Acton. *Beginnings and Growth of Transnational Movements of Roma to Achieve Civil Rights after the Holocaust*). Other scholars, such as Vermeersch, van Baar, and Binder, focus on the post-socialist period and compare the different forms of ethnic mobilization and the Romani movement after 1989.

What texts examine the material of the different Roma movements? Until the publication of this sourcebook, the archival documents that had been collected offered insights into the relationship of the majority society to the Roma minorities (laws, ordonnances, interrogation protocols, the notes of various assemblies and councils the leading figures of which reflect on the “Gypsy question”). This time, it’s the voice of Roma actors, mostly reported in materials that have been published for the first time, including many documents which have never been used before for academic purposes. In the first chapter, which illustrates the prelude to the emancipatory movements of the interwar period, presenting materials from the nineteenth century, the reader encounters the first requests from 1865 to establish a separate state (Gypsy Voivodina) and the appearance of the first professional association in 1890 (of Gypsy musicians, also in the Austro-Hungarian Empire). These early examples, which prove that the beginnings of Roma emancipation followed the paths of the regional nation-building processes, are followed by materials collected from eleven different countries, presented first in the original language and then in an English translation and then supplements with comments by experts. Although the name of the commenters is mentioned and they also appear in the acknowledgment section, it would have been preferable to have introduced them very briefly or at least to have indicated their affiliations. Nevertheless, the primary sources and the comments are both exceptionally exciting. They include documents concerning the establishment of religious and educational associations, articles published in different Roma newspapers, and publications by Gypsy activists from the USSR.

As also suggested by the authors, this outstanding sourcebook should be used not only by a limited niche of scholars and Roma activists but also in primary and secondary education. From now on, discussions of nationalistic visions and the formation of civil society during the first half of the twentieth century throughout Europe should be complemented by discussion of these sources and stories, and Roma civic emancipation in the central, southeastern, and eastern regions of Europe should be seen and understood as an integral and inseparable part of the general development of modern nationalism and, therefore, of the entire European historical canon.

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The Lost World of Socialists at Europe's Margins: Imagining Utopia, 1870s–1920s. By Maria Todorova. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020. 364 pp.

In some ways (and in her own words) Maria Todorova's book is a culmination of a trajectory which began with another "imagining," that of the Balkans: history as an emancipatory project which problematizes ideology and the erasure of liminal spaces and lives (p.252). The author sets out to recapture the appeal of socialism and its utopia at Europe's margins (for the first, pre-1900 generations of Bulgarian socialists), and she masterfully succeeds. The result is a book which will be of interest not only to scholars on the region or the ideology, but those interested in emotions, utopias, or the creation of the modern political subject.

Todorova concentrates on the period before 1917, a time when the notion of a socialist utopia was up for debate and had not yet found "earthly form." She challenges the dominant narrative of two types of social democracy (a Western and a Russian one), which she suggests constitutes an oversimplification of the ideas circulating at the time, when, despite the supposedly hegemonic ideological power of the Second International, other socialisms could flourish on their own merits. Bulgaria, with the strongest social democratic movement in Eastern Europe during that period, thus offers a perfect example with which to fracture this narrative, which situates socialism within working-class industrial societies or sees its arrival in rural communities as an aberration.

Part I of the book deals explicitly with this typology. It consists of two chapters in which Todorova describes the transfer of ideas into Bulgaria and the ways in which local socialists navigated nationalism in these formative years for the nation-state. As Todorova points out, socialism has almost been erased from the latest global histories, despite being the premier dissident idea of the nineteenth century. The first chapter strongly disproves the notion that Bulgarian socialism was transmitted mainly through Russian ideas and the Russian language, and Todorova masterfully shows the local political conditions which shaped the ideas of Bulgarian socialists. In chapter two, the author takes the Western socialists to task too, uncovering their prejudices against the fate of progressive projects in the Balkans at the time.

In Part II, Todorova concentrates on the creation of these generations of socialists through the use of a database and personal narratives. Nearly 3,500 socialists on whom we have data are tallied, allowing Todorova to show the

different trajectories that took them into the movement, from education to experiences of poverty. Here, Todorova combines the quantitative with the qualitative in the best way possible, drawing on many life histories to show the various “socialisms” that existed in Bulgaria, from anarchism and Tolstoyesque ideas to the various Marxist trends. The extent to which socialist ideas exerted a powerful influence on almost all key figures in the Bulgarian national revolutionary movement is notable, and this expands the argument beyond the relatively small socialist movement to the larger trends in popular ideas at the time. Chapter five also explicitly deals with the roles of women in the movement, showing convincingly that many women were socialists before they were wives and supported their socialist husbands in both hidden and open ways, helping them serve as leaders of the movement.

In the final part, Todorova zooms in the most, tackling the issue of scalability: are these lives singular or representative of something else? In three wonderful final chapters, she tells the stories of the socialist elder Angelina Boneva, the graphomaniac Todor Tsekov, and the socialist couple Koika Tineva and Nikola Sakarov. Each story brings out a different strand of her wider argument. She considers how personal stories are created and how memoirs and autobiographical tales differ. The socialist subjects here are far from those we know from similar work done on Soviet socialist diaries, for example. There is no overarching model of the “socialist self” to which these Bulgarians cleave, hence Todorova uncovers various strands of self-narration.

As in her previous work, Todorova sheds light on her own intellectual and archival journeys, and this adds another layer to this work. We see her chasing down references in provincial town archives or meditating on the erasure of personal details in diaries by descendants. This has been a noted feature of Todorova’s work and helps her craft a narrative which engages the reader on every page. She is attentive not just to the political and intellectual journeys of her protagonists, but also spends plenty of time showing how political the personal really is. Anecdotes abound, from tales of food being sent to Kautsky to glimpses into the love lives of some of the protagonists and touching personal notes, complete with flowers, shared by husbands and wives.

Thus, the arguments that Todorova advances intertwine. She digs up the historical debris of the failed project of socialism, rescuing it both from the Soviet shadow that overdetermined its pre-history and its contemporary losses. Carefully noting the limits of her sources, she nevertheless recaptures a world of human visions and emotions that shaped a utopia that was not yet there

and even after 1917 was contested. Through the personal narratives of various figures, she shows the broader divisions of Bulgarian socialism into Narrows and Broads, their internecine struggles, and the issues at stake. She convincingly shows that these socialist utopias were born out of the peculiar circumstances of post-independence Bulgaria: an imperfect but existing parliamentary democracy with a largely egalitarian social structure and a strong focus on education as cultural capital. These socialists thus constructed politics attuned to the Balkan circumstances, beyond German or Russian patronage. Though their imaginative vision was physically destroyed by the White Terror of 1923–25 and narratively destroyed by the hegemony of orthodox communist historiography after 1944, Todorova implores us nonetheless to take it seriously. Just because something failed doesn't mean it must be excised from history. And if we focus solely on things that did succeed (if the whole history of the vision of a socialist utopia is merely a way to explain the Soviet experiment), we miss things that did in fact happen, for Bulgarian socialism did create its own concepts and lived experience between 1870 and 1920.

Todorova's book is not just a historical tour-de-force, showing how emotions and ideologies continuously shape each other or how individuals form their own subjectivities. It is also not simply a beautiful narrative of extraordinary lives of ordinary people who sought to find their place in life. It can also be read as a call to take early socialism seriously as a project which gave rise to multiple ways of fighting for solidarity and a better world. It is no coincidence, in my view, that the poem "September" by Geo Milev, a Bulgarian socialist who died as a martyr to his cause, is frequently cited. Many people from all walks of life saw something vital in these ideas in Bulgaria and participated wholeheartedly in constructing themselves as participants in this project and the project itself as a unique movement.

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Imagining Bosnian Muslims in Central Europe, Representations, Transfers and Exchanges. Edited by František Šístek. New York–Oxford: Berghahn, 2021. 302 pp.

The present volume is the result of a Czech research project entitled “Central Europe and Balkan Muslims: Relations, Images, Stereotypes,” coordinated by Ladislav Hladký and František Šístek. *Imagining Bosnian Muslims in Central Europe* proposes a panorama of the encounters, exchanges, and transfers among the peoples of Central Europe and the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The volume devotes attention to the development and transformations of a modern Bosnian Muslim identity on the long term. It investigates the attitudes and policies of Central European societies towards Bosnian Muslims and asks how Central European representations and conceptualizations of Bosnians affected the identity of the latter. Central Europe is understood by the authors in the widest possible sense, which covers the former territories of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Balkans, and Germany. The Balkans and Central Europe are deeply intertwined and overlapping ethnic spaces, and, as František Šístek convincingly argues in the introduction, Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes should be included in discourses on Central Europe even if these peoples are ascribed to other regions as well. The time scope of the volume extends from the early nineteenth century to the twenty-first century, which is necessary if one seeks to offer an analysis of the long-term influences and effects of Bosnian Muslim history concerning identity constructions and representations. A case in point is the effects of the Millet system on religion, nation, and culture. The Millet system not only restrained the formation of national identities in the nineteenth century, which was reinforced by the policies of Béni Kállay (the long-time Habsburg governor of the province) on separating religious communities. It also had a lasting influence on the identity constructions to which Bosnian Muslims turned in the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav periods (as discussed in the chapter by Božidar Jezernik).

Bosnian Muslim identity has been significantly influenced by the special (ethnic and religious) position of the group in the constantly changing political landscape in the Balkans. The chapter by Charles Sabatos attributed a malleable and weak identity to Bosnian Muslims. For instance, the Croatian writer Vjenceslav Novak regards them as misguided Serbs who have been lost to their community. South Slavic writers would consider their identity as a “temporary

costume” (p.146) which should be replaced by a different Slavic identity in the long run.

There are no thematic sections or underlying structure in the volume, but some arguments are put forward by several articles and thus are worth discussing in some detail. One of them concerns the special status of Bosnian Islam in the Muslim world. Zora Hesová introduces the concept of secularity, that is “a capacity to exist *qua* religion within a secular context” (p.117). The high level of secularity of Bosnian Muslims is largely thanks to the legacy of Habsburg rule, which established an autonomous Islamic community. Hesová demonstrates how this institution managed to survive until the twenty-first century, for instance, in the very structure of the most recent constitution of the Bosnian Islamic community in 2004. The process of secularization had started in other spheres in the late nineteenth century as well. Concerning the educational system, Oliver Pejić describes how Croatian elementary school textbooks were adapted to the needs of both Christian and Muslim pupils. The deliberate adaptation of textbooks helped replace traditional religious schools with interconfessional state schools and promoted the Westernization and integration of the Bosnian Muslim community in line with the efforts of Habsburg administrators.

The Habsburg experience and the geographical proximity of Bosnian Muslims to Europe significantly impacted Central European attitudes towards the community. These attitudes, like the Bosnian Muslim identity, were malleable and constantly changing. The negative stigmatization of Bosnian Muslims is a recurring phenomenon in Central European societies. The chapter by František Šístek argues that Czech literature and travelogues generally presented a negative image of Bosnian Muslims. The “Turk” (also used as a synonym for Bosnian Muslims) is similarly presented as barbarian and savage during the occupation war. The chapter by Martin Gabriel reveals that Muslim fighters were associated with the Turks and were described as “brute and inhuman” in the Habsburg press. The Turkish reference remained a long-standing stigma for Bosnian Muslims, as illustrated by Marija Mandić, who notes a particular Serbian proverb (“A Turk convert is worse than a Turk”) and its uses in public discourse. The proverb was used to repudiate and demonize the Ottoman heritage and stigmatize Slavic Muslims as betrayers of the national body. However, the geographical proximity of Bosnian Muslims and the direct interactions between Bosnian Muslims and Central Europeans resulted in positive attitudes towards Bosnian Muslims in certain contexts. The chapters by Aldina Čemernica and Merima Šehagić give examples of these attitudes: Bosnian Muslims are regarded as secular and white

Europeans, the exemplary representatives of a European Islam. In addition, Bosnian Muslim migrants faced less discrimination and stigmatization (for example in Germany), and they were even regarded as a refugee elite in some countries. This positive view was shaped in part by the aforementioned higher level of secularization among Bosnian Muslims.

As is noted in the closing remarks, the volume does not fully adopt the promised long-term perspective, because the Yugoslav period has attracted much less scholarly attention so far and, as is plainly seen in the time-scope of the present contributions. In the meantime, there has been a growing interest in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina under Habsburg rule between 1878 and 1918. This finds expression in the plethora of works devoted to the political, cultural, and economic aspects of Habsburg occupation in the provinces and in the creative use and rethinking of now classical approaches like Said's Orientalism and post-colonial theory, which are nicely reinterpreted and rethought in the present contributions. However, the volume does not do justice to representations and transfers in the whole of the Central European region. The interactions among Hungarians and Bosnian Muslims are not addressed in any of the contributions, although the Ottoman Empire and Hungary have had an eventful common history, and Hungary, as an integral part of the Habsburg Monarchy, was actively involved in the occupation and annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. A symbolic indication of this neglect is that Francis Joseph is often referred to in the text as "the Kaiser," although Bosnia and Herzegovina was occupied by the whole of the empire and was governed by the common minister of finance (not responsible to and not elected by the Austrian or Hungarian government). In spite of this lacuna, the volume is a welcome addition to the ongoing scholarly debates on the history and present of Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the Balkans but also as a constitutive element of Central Europe.

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Women and Politics: Nationalism and Femininity in Interwar Hungary.
By Balázs Sipos. Trondheim: Trondheim Studies on East European
Cultures & Societies, 2019. 163 pp.

The English-language monograph by Balázs Sipos, which focuses on an era of Hungarian women's history on which no comprehensive historical analysis had yet been published, is a long overdue contribution to the secondary literature. Sipos is associate professor and head of the Women's History Research Centre (*Nőtörténeti Kutatóközpont*) at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. He is also a widely-published author on Hungarian women's history and media history. His present work is significant in part because, with the notable exceptions of the books and articles by Andrea Pető and Judith Sapor, very few English-language works have been published on the history of women in Hungary in the first half of the twentieth century.

Sipos does not limit his focus to women's history of the interwar period, but examines also the second half of the Dualist Era and World War I. Given his methodological background in media history and his exhaustive analysis of the periodization of women's history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, he is able to discuss long-term changes and place his arguments in a wider context. He sets out to offer a combination of political, media, and cultural history by treating these fields of inquiry as an organic whole, an aspiration which he admirably achieves with this book.

Sipos has studied almost every aspect of women's lives and the ways in which their lives were affected by dramatically shifting attitudes towards female emancipation. He argues that the media "created and transmitted an ideology of [...] emancipation encouraging women to be prepared for independent life" (p.6), not only before 1918 but also throughout the Horthy era. To support his hypothesis, he draws on contemporary Hungarian periodicals, women's magazines, literary pieces, lexicons, and products of the Western media, such as movies and novels.

After providing a general political, economic, and social overview of the era, Sipos highlights the most important milestones in Hungarian women's emancipation between 1867 and 1939 by examining different trends in women's movements and organizational culture. These details are essential, as they enable him to introduce his highly innovative viewpoints related to the periodization of women's history in nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Hungary. Sipos

breaks away from the traditional models and argues that, “rather than deactivating feminism, the war generated new problems and complicated old ones” (p.24). Furthermore, he proposes that it is high time to reevaluate women’s history in the interwar period, an opinion I fully share. In the seven chapters of the book, Sipos demonstrates several times that the whole era (not only the decades before 1918) were characterized by growing engagement in public affairs by women. The most important factor in this field was that women continuously tried to adjust to newly-emerging challenges, and alongside new participants, new consensus also appeared on the scene.

Sipos insists that the interwar period was not characterized by “feminine passivity” (p.25), because women remained active in the public sphere in the 1920 and 1930s. He thus challenges the traditional periodization of women’s history regarding the 19th and 20th centuries and offers a perspective which is entirely new to the secondary literature. Sipos claims that the first period of women’s history lasted from the 1860s (not from 1867) until the turn of the century. The second one, he suggests, began around 1900 and lasted until the years following the Second World War. He justifies his argument with several sociocultural reasons, including the development of different branches of women’s organizations and the extension of the institutional frameworks of women’s institutional education. Within this second period, he distinguishes “three temporary ‘subperiods’” (p.45), namely the period between 1914 and 1922, the years of the Great Depression (1929–1934), and the “period of anti-Semitic measures taken during the Second World War” (p.45). This approach is highly innovative, although it might have been useful to supplement it with a further a “subperiod” between 1900/1904–1913/1914, as several turning points in the women’s movement came during this period of roughly 15 years.

In Chapters 3–7, Sipos analyses the extent to which anti-feminist and anti-emancipation policies can be said to have influenced the situation of women between the two World Wars. In his assessment, this is or more precisely should be the central question of interwar women’s history in Hungary. In the third chapter, he studies the role and significance of World War I in the alternation of women’s political, economic, and social positions. In Chapter 4, he examines interpretations of the notion of the “modern” women, women’s issues, and feminism in the contemporary Hungarian media. He also considers the neo-Biedermeier portrayal and those women who stayed at home. The end of this section gives important data on women’s employment as well. After examining the different types of discourse about and for women in the periodical press,

Sipos studies the transnational female role models (i.e., the Flapper and the Garçonne), the images and interpretations of which influenced Hungarian public opinion. In the last section, he gives an overview on how contemporary Hungarian movies approached and displayed female roles.

Sipos works with a significant source base and uses altogether 19 contemporary Hungarian periodicals, of which he discusses two in greater detail (*A Magyar Asszony* [The Hungarian Woman], which was the official organ of the National Association of Hungarian Women (*Magyar Asszonyok Nemzeti Szövetsége*), and *Új Idők* [New Times], edited by Ferenc Herczeg) (pp.91–111). He also relies on *Ius Suffragii*, the official organ of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (later renamed the International Alliance of Women), which is an almost inexhaustible source on the women's movement before 1924. Among these periodicals, the reader might miss the more in-depth analysis of the official organ of the Feminists' Association (*Feministák Egyesülete*). Naturally, Sipos notes that the Feminists' Association weakened considerably after the regime changes of 1918–1919, but the publication of *A Nő. Feminista Folyóirat* [The Woman: A Feminist Periodical] continued until 1927/1928. Although it was unable to regain its former positions, its number of members, and the number of readers of its periodical within the framework of the “new women's movement” of the Horthy era, the Feminists' Association succeeded in redefining itself and its goals in the early 1920s. That meant, however, that within a narrower framework than before, it could operate until its ban in 1942 and then between 1946 and 1949. With regards to the organizations, it is perhaps unfortunate that their names are only given in English translation, with no mention of their original Hungarian names.

The volume is rich in citations from the sources and also in interesting statistical data and illustrations. Sipos primarily addresses fellow scholars, but his book will still capture the interest of a readership curious to know more about the history of the interwar period. Most importantly, Sipos's monograph will do a great deal to further the integration of scholarship on women's history in Hungary into the international body of secondary literature, which today is perhaps more important than it has ever been.

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“Glaube an den Menschen” [Faith in humanity: A diary from Bergen-Belsen]. By Jenő Kolb. Edited by Thomas Rahe and Lajos Fischer. Translated from the Hungarian by Lajos Fischer. Bergen-Belsen – Berichte und Zeugnisse 7. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2019. 280 pp.

“Hit az emberben”. Bergen-belseni napló. [Faith in humanity. A diary from Bergen-Belsen]. By Jenő Kolb. Edited by Thomas Rahe and Lajos Fischer. Bergen-Belsen – Berichte und Zeugnisse 8. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2020. 280 pp.

In recent years, there has been considerable interest among historians in diaries related to the Holocaust. This is part of a paradigm shift in the secondary literature on the Holocaust, which has come to focus more on family sources, mostly ego-documents. Nonetheless, historians (Hungarian historians in particular) only rarely make use of contemporary personal materials (such as diaries, correspondence, and photographs) as sources on modern history which are as relevant as archival documents.

One of the highly disputed chapters of the Shoah is the history of the so called Kasztner train. Rezső Kasztner (also went by the name Rudolf Kasztner and Israel Kasztner) worked as the deputy chairman of the Zionist Aid and Rescue Committee (Vaada) in Budapest. In 1944, as a result of his negotiations with Kurt Becher and Adolf Eichmann, he was able to organize the escape of more than 1,500 Hungarian Jews to Switzerland for a huge amount of money, which was transferred to the SS. This rescue action was part of Himmler’s big “exchange plan” formed with the Allies, for which Bergen-Belsen had formed by the SS back in 1943.

The personal sources related to the Kasztner passengers have peculiar significance. Jenő Kolb and his daughter managed to get on the Kasztner train. Kolb was born in Sopron in 1898 to a secular middle-class Jewish family. He studied art history in Austria and Germany, and in the 1920s, he became a member of the prominent Jewish liberal intellectual circles of Budapest as a lecturer and journalist. In the early 1930s, Kolb turned to Marxist-Socialist-Zionist ideas, and by the end of the decade, he had become a leading figure in the Hasomer Hacair movement. He kept a diary from the moment of his deportation from Budapest (June 30, 1944), throughout his time in Bergen-Belsen (July 9–December 4, 1944), and after his successful escape and his first days of

freedom in Switzerland (December 6–12, 1944). His work was not unknown to historians. The original handwritten Hungarian text was donated to the Yad Vashem by his daughter, Shosana Hasson-Kolb, and preserved by the Jerusalem-based Institute and Archive from the late 1950s, but it was essentially forgotten until 2000, when the Bergen-Belsen Memorial (*Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen*) decided to publish it. While this German-language edition met the scholarly expectations of its time, there have been many new research findings since then, so this new edition, complete with commentaries and notes, is a welcome publication. It is unique in part because of the publisher's aim to reach both an international readership and the Hungarian readership. In order to attain this goal, Wallstein Verlag published Kolb's diary almost simultaneously with the very same editorial contributions in 2019 and 2020, first in German and then in Hungarian.

The volume is divided into two major parts. In the first, the editors (Lajos Fischer and Thomas Rahe) explain the circumstances surrounding the publication of the new editions. Rahe also offers an epic study on the connection between Jenő Kolb's diary and the fates of the passengers on the Kasztner train in the concentration camp. This ambitious summary focuses on almost every aspect of the Kasztner story, giving a remarkable historical framework to the diary based on current research findings and sources which have been methodically interpreted. Rahe analyzes the societal components, including the number of the passengers, concluding that it may have been 1,684, though no one has conclusively determined the exact number of passengers so far. Rahe also analyzes the nationalities, religious distribution, and ages of the Kasztner group in Belsen, demonstrating (based on his own research) that 1,179 passengers (71 percent) seem to have been Hungarian, while the rest were Romanian, Yugoslavian, Czechoslovakian, and Polish Jews. They were mostly middle-aged Jews, frequently Zionists, with a significant number of East-Hungarian Orthodox Jewry and "Neolog" inhabitants from Budapest. It is worth noting that the significant proportion of elderly people (8.5 percent) was the second largest ratio of old inmates in the concentration camp world (after Theresienstadt). Rahe then demonstrates how the heterogeneity of these factors contributed to the heterogeneity of the group as a whole, which led to several inner problems during the process of deportation from Budapest, problems which mostly came to the surface in the *Aufenthaltslager* of Belsen. The second part of the study reflects on the most essential questions of the daily lives of the prisoners inside the camp. They were "prominent Jews" as part of the "exchange program," so they were treated differently by the SS and were

held in a separate sector (*Sonderlager*, later referred to as the *Ungarnlager*) of the exchange camp area. Rahe's examination offers a portrait of a comparatively multi-ethnic, privileged group of Jews from the Carpathian Basin who were hoping to be spared. He examines the children's schooling, the surprisingly diverse array of cultural activities in the barracks, the religious customs and activities of the prisoners, and other instances and forms of self-organization among them. The last section of the study is about the diaries which were kept by the inmates in Bergen-Belsen, regardless of how they arrived in the camp or which part of the camp they were held in. Rahe mentions 30 diaries, though he does not include in his discussion all of the Hungarian diaries documented in the secondary literature in Hungarian.

Rahe's discussion is followed by a short study by Szabolcs Szita concerning some of the details of the Kasztner train. Surprisingly, Szita did not use the most relevant and current bibliography for his work, so his remarks add little new information to our knowledge of Kolb's diary. In contrast, the personal accounts by Kolb's daughter Shoshana Hasson-Kolb give intimate details about her father's life before and after deportation, highlighting his activity in the Hasomer Hacair's movement.

The second, largest part of the volume is the diary itself. The text suggests that, as an influential and agile intellectual, Kolb played a key role in the Ungarnlager. He was responsible for Zionist cultural activities, and he established a choir and held lectures on music and art history in the group's accommodations in the 10–11. barracks. Kolb wrote log entries every day or at least every other day, which is why his diary is the richest and most extensive of the diaries from this "prominent group." These informative entries present the history of the Kasztner train, from the detention camp in Budapest, the boarding of the train at the Rákosszentimre railway station, and the long journey from the Hungarian capital to Bergen-Belsen and then to Switzerland. The longest and most detailed entries were written while Kolb was in the concentration camp. Many entries are about his beloved homeland and his anxieties concerning the fates of his relatives and friends. Other entries offer an impression of everyday problems within the barrack, including the constant sense of fear, insecurity, hunger, and the lack of information. Kolb also provides a great deal of information about the distinctive personalities of some of the inmates and, in particular, the cooperation among the rival Hungarian groups, especially between the orthodox and the Haluc youngsters. He was obviously prejudiced because of his attachment to the Zionist movement, but the editors offer more than 270

footnotes to explain his biased comments or they call the reader's attention to the current historical bibliography. In some cases, it might have been preferable had Rahe and Fischer resolved some of the issues that arise because of the old-fashioned foreign phrases in the diary entries. They include two additions which offer nice supplements to the diary. Kolb felt that he and the other inmates were the inhabitants of a kind of closed small town in the middle of the horrific concentration camp. He often wrote about the different levels of the self-organization system of the Ungarnlager under SS control, from its leadership to the everyday mechanisms of different subdepartments. The editors have included official Operation Rules of the Ungarnlager as an annex, which provides useful context for the diary entries, and they have also included short biographies of all the individuals mentioned in the pages of the diary, plus a useful glossary on the most common Hebrew words found in the entries.

This publication of Jenő Kolb's entire diary with the accompanying editorial materials constitutes a serious contribution to the social history of the Hungarian Holocaust and our understanding of the complex realities of the Nazi concentration camps.

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The Legacy of Division: East and West after 1989. Edited by Ferenc Laczó and Luka Lisjak Gabrijelčić. Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 2020. 344 pp.

“By believing passionately in something that still does not exist, we create it.
The nonexistent is whatever we have not sufficiently desired.”
— Franz Kafka

The Legacy of Division: East and West after 1989 is a rich, multifaceted volume consisting of 24 essays and two interviews. It reflects the complexity of post-communist Eastern Europe, its 30 years on the path to democracy, and the turbulent present. The book exposes the many prevailing clichés and stereotypes held by those in the West and the East about themselves, each other, what happened since 1989, whose “fault” it was, and how we ended up where we are today, at a moment which feels like an inflection point.

It is impossible to summarize all 24 essays here, as the editors went for breadth and gave authors significant creative freedom. Instead, I have two goals in this review. First, I will highlight a few points made by several of the authors. Second, I will offer a way to move beyond the East-West paradigm by inviting the reader to abandon the exhausted labels of “East” and “West” and focusing instead on conceptually capturing the democratic decline worldwide.

What are the East and the West? The East is loosely defined as a set of countries that spent more than half of the twentieth century behind the Iron Curtain. What is the West? Liberal democracies? The US and the countries of the EU? The only shared understanding about the West, as the reader can guess, is that the West is not the East. This is because both the East and the West are artificial constructs, as is the division which separates them. They are oversimplifications or shortcuts which simplify complex realities which are difficult to grasp by those who live them, study them, or gaze at them.

The opening essay by Dorothee Bohle and Bela Gretskevits is an intellectual tour de force of the past 30 years through the lens of political economy. The authors, eminent scholars of Eastern Europe, highlight three popular misperceptions concerning the construction of capitalism on the European periphery, the mixed blessing of free movement of capital and labor in the EU, and the power of the EU to oppose illiberal tendencies in its (Eastern) member states. I will focus on the first of these, (the construction of) capitalism

on the periphery. Here, the consequence is perhaps best exemplified by the recent transfer of German Amazon to the Czech borderland. Amazon, a global company, does not serve Czech customers. It does not ship to the Czech Republic. Instead, Czech workers prepare packages for German customers. For Amazon, the Czech Republic is a place on the periphery of the Western market, with cheaper labor, more docile workers, and less strict labor regulations. The East is a reservoir of cheap and conveniently located labor.

The essay by Bohle and Greskovits connects thematically with those by Phillip Ther and Claus Leggewie, which focus on German unification. In a way, the transformation of East Germany is a paradigmatic case. Best described as “shock therapy,” the measures that were introduced in the wake of unification changed everything in a short period of time, both in political and economic terms. The East Germans were told to change but also periodically reminded that their past had permanently damaged them. Failure to adapt was used to stigmatize. Critics were ostracized. The “inferiority” of East Germans was used to justify what was done to them, and the wild capitalism in East Germany benefited few. The approach was replicated with minor alterations across the region by powers domestic and foreign. The political consequences of this approach are gradually emerging now, two of which are the revolt of (some) East Germans and East Europeans against “colonization” by the West. Everything was supposed to be better in the West until it was not (for most).

The chasm between expectations and reality led to the rise of protest movements and increasing support for the different types of radical right. People might not have known what they wanted, but they increasingly came to reject what they had gotten. As Claus Leggewie highlights, the East might be showing the West a glimpse of its future, a society in which “losers” revolt. The winners took it all. Those “left behind,” a significant part of society, are alienated. Caught in the second-class citizenship of an increasingly contracting welfare state, they seek refuge in nativism.

Jan Zielonka argues that these processes are not unique to the East. According to Zielonka, both the East and the West are stereotypes the roots of which admittedly lie in some historical reality, but as stereotypes they are nonetheless counterproductive, as they thwart systematic studies of change. Over-generalization and under-conceptualization prevent us from seeing both the differences and similarities across the East and West. Old labels such as “post-communism” have exhausted their explanatory power. A variety of regimes emerged after communism, so there is no singular post-communism. Perhaps

we ought to focus on historical legacies, elite choices, institutional variations, and the differences in active citizenship (the ability of citizens to play active parts in the democratic processes) at the ballot box and in the streets if necessary.

Contrary to Zielonka, Ivan Krastev, in a book with Stephen Holmes, *The Light that Failed* (2019), sees the East European development after 1989 as an imitation of the West.² In the book and in an interview (which is a part of the book under review), Krastev sees democracy in the East as a copy or an imitation of a victorious Cold War paradigm, which resulted in resentment of the elites who were behind the process of imitation and of the original which was being admitted. However, to explain the illiberal turn as a revolt against liberalism, Krastev and Holmes under-conceptualize liberalism. Beyond a set of values and norms, liberalism has a significant economic dimension. The rise of populism has some autocratic roots, but it is mainly a backlash against the transition-era neoliberalism.³ Perhaps the light did not go off. Rather, it was turned off by the elite presiding over the economic transformation.

This legacy of the era is low wages and poverty for significant parts of the population, and all hiding in plain sight behind macroeconomic indicators, such as GDP growth and low unemployment, not to mention the facades of palaces built by the Eastern European oligarchs. Economic deprivation among parts of the Eastern population, more than political “illiberalism,” shapes negative attitudes to migration and refugees. Inward migration benefits Western companies by keeping labor available and labor costs low. By opposing immigration and globalization, Eastern European workers are defending their economic interests.⁴

Westward migration is often the only option to escape local deprivation. The price is a brain drain of skilled professionals and poor working conditions for seasonal workers. The primary cause of the demographic “crisis” is not mass westward migration (with some key exceptions such as Bulgaria and perhaps to a lesser degree Poland), but the economic circumstances of young families and the lack of a balance between work and life.⁵

2 Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes, *The light that failed: A reckoning* (London: Penguin, 2019).

3 Eszter Kovats and Katerina Smejkalova, “East-Central Europe’s Revolt against Imitation,” *IPS Journal* March 30, 2020, <https://www.ips-journal.eu/regions/europe/east-central-europes-revolt-against-imitation-4205/>.

4 Pavol Baboš, “Globalization and Support for Democracy in Post-Communist Europe,” *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 39 (2018): 23–43.

5 Nancy C. Jurik, Alena Křížková, Marie Pospíšilová, and Gray Cavender, “Blending, credit, context: Doing business, family and gender in Czech and US copreneurships,” *International Small Business Journal* 37, no. 4 (2019): 317–42, doi: 10.1177/0266242618825260.

As the chapter by Bohle and Greskovits shows, the East is a reservoir of cheap labor, and the attempt to escape late capitalism incentivizes some to embrace illiberal populism and its promise of welfare chauvinism. Not only are these processes similar across the East (from East Germany through Poland to Hungary and beyond), but increasingly similar revolts can be seen across the West. There are differences in intensity and the casts of characters, but an increasingly sizable portion of European society is blaming liberal democracy for its failure to tame economic liberalism in the era of globalization.⁶

The one common aspect over the last decade across the region and the world is the decline in democratic quality. In terms of democracy, defined as a regime resting on pluralistic democratic institutions (a free press, civil society, and the rule of law), the East today is a set of countries with democracies in consolidation, defective democracies, hybrid regimes, and moderate and hardline autocracies. In terms of economy defined as a free market economy, one finds in the East highly advanced, advanced, limited, very limited, and rudimentary capitalist economies. There is extreme variation across the region both in terms of democracy and in terms of economy.⁷

There is little agreement on the symptoms, causes, effects, and trajectory of the ongoing change (or decline) in the quality of democracy in Eastern Europe and around the world in the secondary literature. A growing body of literature focuses on the recent changes, which are labeled backsliding, illiberal drift, deconsolidation, and swerving.⁸

One possible cause of democratic decline is the legitimization crisis triggered by the economic crisis. Habermas outlined a “chain reaction” from economic crisis to a crisis of democratic legitimacy.⁹ An economic crisis (a periodical event inherent to capitalism), triggers a governance crisis. The governance crisis (the inability of governments to cope with the economic crisis) triggers a legitimization crisis. A legitimization crisis is marked by a loss of trust in democratic institutions and a loss of support for democracy as a system of governance

6 Cf. Kovats and Smejkalova, “East-Central Europe’s Revolt”; Baboš, “Globalization.”

7 Petra Guasti, “Democracy under Stress: Changing Perspectives on Democracy, Governance and Their Measurement,” in *Democracy under Stress: Changing Perspectives on Democracy, Governance, and Their Measurement*, ed. Petra Guasti, Zdenka Mansfeldova, (Prague: ISASCR, 2018), 9–27.

8 For the discussion, see Lenka Bustikova and Petra Guasti, “The Illiberal Turn or Swerve in Central Europe?” *Politics and Governance* 5, no. 4 (2017): 166–76, doi: 10.17645/pag.v5i4.1156.

9 Jürgen Habermas, “What does a crisis mean today? Legitimation problems in late capitalism,” *Social Research* 40, no. 4 (1973): 643–67.

by citizens. Alongside economic crisis, external shocks which can trigger the crisis of democratic legitimacy can include globalization, deepening regional integration, and immigration, framed by anti-establishment elites as threats to national sovereignty.¹⁰

Democratic decline is not unique to the East. It can be observed all over the world. The symptoms include declining trust in democratic institutions, emboldened uncivil society, increased political control of the media, civic apathy, and nationalistic contestation. It is based on the notion of an *illiberal turn* from liberalism and pluralism.¹¹ The critique of the backsliding/illiberal turn paradigm focuses on its underlining presumption of a more or less linear trajectory and a consolidated democratic system from which recent events are seen as a reverse, a lack of analytical distinction and precision of the loci of democratic decline (demand or supply-side), the resilience of democracy, and the counterbalance between strength and weaknesses on different levels of consolidation.¹²

If one cannot “lose what one never had,” what is going on in the East and the West? Bustikova and Guasti (2017) proposed a novel model of change characterized by a sequence of “episodes,” some of which can be characterized as an *illiberal sverve*.¹³ The notion of volatile episodes does not follow any distinct, coherent long-durée trajectory. It enables Bustikova and Guasti to investigate “the limits of path dependence and consider the possibility of an inherently uncertain path”. The use of a microscopic approach which focuses on smaller temporal sequences marked by elections or other clearly defined temporal sequences rather than on tectonic shifts in regimes provides valuable insights into the dynamic character of democratic quality and sharpens the analytical lens on recent developments in the East and the West. Perhaps it is a time to bridge the East-West divide by focusing our research on similarities rather than overemphasizing differences and oversimplifying their causes.

Some books answer questions, and some books inspire readers to ask more questions. *The Legacy of Division: East and West after 1989* belongs to the latter group. In an essayistic way, it invites a broad audience to consider questions of the present and the past. Readers might include scholars, students, and journalists, but thanks to the essayistic style, any member of the broader public interested in

10 Guasti, “Democracy under Stress.”

11 Bustikova and Guasti, “The Illiberal Turn.”

12 Guasti, “Democracy under Stress.”

13 Bustikova and Guasti, “The Illiberal Turn.”

understanding the varied nature and legacies of the East-West divisions will find the book engaging. The future is open, and our thinking about it is richer thanks to *The Legacy of Division: East and West after 1989*.

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